

the insecurity of the roads, the villainous accommodation *en route*, and its isolated position account for the neglect.<sup>1</sup> Here as elsewhere I am much impressed with the excellence of the work done by the American missionaries, who are really the lights of these dark places, and by their exemplary and honourable lives furnish that *moral model* and standard of living which is more efficacious than preaching in lifting up the lives of a people sunk in the depths of a grossly corrupted Christianity. The boys' and girls' schools in Van are on an excellent basis, and are not only turning out capable men and women, but are stimulating the Armenians to

Their national church claims an older than an apostolic foundation, and historically dates from the third century, its actual founder, S. Gregory the Illuminator, having been consecrated at Csesarea as Bishop of Armenia in the second year of the fourth century. In the fifteenth century a schism brought about by Jesuit missionaries resulted in a number of Armenians joining the Church of Rome, and becoming later a separate community known as the "Catholic Armenian Church." Within the last half-century, under the teaching of the American missionaries, a Reformed Church has arisen, known as the Protestant Armenian Church, but with these exceptions the race and the national church may be regarded as one. The Armenians have had no political existence since the year 1604, but form an element of stability and wealth in Turkey, Russia, and Persia, where they are principally found.

Their language is regarded by scholars as an off-shoot of the Iranian branch of the Indo-Germanic group of languages. Their existing literature dates from the fourth century, and all that is not exclusively Christian has perished. Translations of the Old and New Testaments dating from the fifth century are among its oldest monuments, and the dialect in which they are written, and in which they are still read in the churches, known as Old Armenian, is not now understood by the people. During the last

century there has been a great revival of letters among the Armenians, chiefly due to the *Mekhitarists* of Venice, and a literature in modern Armenian is rapidly developing alongside of the study and publication of the works of the ancient writers.

<sup>1</sup> It has, however, received due attention both from scholars and anti-quaries, and among the popularly-written accounts of it are very interesting chapters in Sir A. H. Layard's *Nineveh and Babylon*, and in a charming volume by the Rev. H. F. Tozer, *Turkish Armenia and Eastern Ada, Minor*,